DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 333 321 CG 023 477

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TITLE The Impact of the Nicholls State-Youth Opportunities Unlimited Program as Related to Academic Achievement, Self-Esteem, and Locus of Control.
PUB DATE May 90
NOTE 144p.; M.A. thesis, Nicholls State University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Counseling Services; *Dropout Prevention; Dropout Research; *Grade 8; High Risk Students; Job Training; Junior High School Students; Locus of Control; Low Income; *Potential Dropouts; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; Secondary Education; Self Esteem; *Summer Programs

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of the Nicholls State-Youth Opportunities Unlimited (NS-YOU) program on 30 adolescents aged 14 and 15. The NS-YOU summer program was designed by Nicholls State University to address the dropout problem among adolescents from low income families. This program provided remediation, counseling, and job training to 14- and 15-year-old adolescents in a 7-week on-campus setting. Both the NS-YOU subjects and a control group of 30 participants were pretested before the program began, and posttested at the termination of the program. Areas studied included academic achievement, self-esteem, and locus of control. The NS-YOU group either made gains or maintained functioning levels in all areas while participating in the program. During the same time period, the control group decreased in all areas. In the academic areas of reading and mathematics, the NS-YOU group's scores increased while the control group's scores decreased. In the area of self-esteem, the NS-YOU group's scores decreased slightly, while those of the control group decreased drastically. The NS-YOU group decreased their level of locus of control, while those in the control group increased their scores, indicating a more external locus of control. Overall, immediate effects of the NS-YOU program proved to be positive and helpful to the participants. In a 6-month follow-up the NS-YOU participants maintained the gains made on the posttest and surpassed their control group counterparts in all areas. (LLL)

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The Impact of the Nicholls State - Youth Opportunities Unlimited Program as Related to Academic Achievement, Self-Esteem, and Locus of Control

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

Nicholls State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Beth Ann Curry

B.A., Nicholls State University, 1985

May, 1990

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late grandmother, Viola F. Curry. She was the first to instill in me the importance of education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. James Payson, who without knowing me, agreed to be my major professor and chair this thesis. His guidance and support have been invaluable to the completion of this endeavor. I would also like to thank Dr. Earl Folse, Dr. Jane Ross-Reynolds, and Dr. Richard McKnight for their special contributions and assistance.

I would like to thank Dr. Anita Tully, Director of the NS-YOU Program, for her continued inspiration, encouragement, and support. In addition, I would like to thank Mr. Keith Ortego, Executive Director of The Work Connection, for allowing me to use the NS-YOU Program for my research and for his understanding and support as my employer.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their love and support. Special thanks go to Roger Curry, Shawn Curry, Darlene Adams, and, of course, Wally.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect that the Nicholls State - Youth Opportunities Unlimited (NS-YOU) Program had upon 30 adolescents between the ages of 14 and 15 years old. Areas studied include academic achievement, self-esteem, and locus of control. Chapter 1 surveys the background of the dropout problem, briefly describes the NS-YOU 1989 Summer Program, gives information on subject selection, instrumentation, results of the program, and a discussion of the results. This chapter also describes the purpose of the study, the hypotheses, and the definitions of the major terms used in the study.

Chapter 2 presents a review of selected literature and research relevant to this study, including special attention to the role of low socioeconomic status in creating dropouts. A discussion of how academic achievement, self-esteem, and locus of control are related to the dropout and low socioeconomic status is also provided.

Chapter 3 presents an explanation of how participants were selected for participation in the NS-YOU group and control group. The three testing instruments are identified and explained in detail.

Testing procedures are also described. The NS-YOU program (treatment the NS-YOU group received) is described in full detail. Finally, descriptions of the research design and statistical analysis are given.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the data analyses conducted to test three hypotheses:

With regard to scores obtained for each dependent variable (reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control) on a posttest and 6-month follow-up test:

1. There will be no significant main effect of Groups (NS-YOU vs. control).
2. There will be no significant main effect of Time (posttest vs. 6-month follow-up test).
3. There will be no significant interaction effects between Groups and Time.

The hypotheses were tested using a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of Groups (NS-YOU vs. control) X Time (posttest vs. 6-month follow-up test). Each hypothesis was tested using a separate ANOVA for each dependent variable (reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control). Results of each ANOVA are presented separately.

The study concludes with a determination of how the NS-YOU participants performed over a 6-month period

compared to a control group in the areas of academic achievement (reading and mathematics), self-esteem, and locus of control. Chapter 5 includes results of the study used to determine if gains were maintained from the posttest to the 6-month follow-up test for both the NS-YOU group and control group. These results are discussed along with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study by reviewing the background of the problem, which includes the identification of dropouts and the effect they have on society. This chapter briefly describes the NS-YOU 1989 Summer Program results. Included is information on the subject selection, instrumentation, results of the program, and a discussion of the results. This chapter also describes the purpose of the study, the hypotheses, and the definitions of the major terms used in the study.

Background of the Problem

Research indicates that dropping out of school has negative consequences for both the individual who drops out and for society (Rumberger, 1987). A dropout is considered to be someone who has left school without a high school diploma (Hotchkiss & Dorsten, 1985), who is not currently attending school, and who has not passed the General Educational Development (GED) examination in order to receive a high school equivalency certificate from the state (Job Training Partnership Act, 1982). Natriello, Pallas, and McDill (1986) state that the dropout problem is not ever likely to go away. However,

efforts can be made to improve the nation's understanding of the problem and help reduce its incidence through education, policy, and research (Rumberger, 1987).

From a global viewpoint, potential dropouts can be identified as "economically, academically, and socially disadvantaged students" (Guillot, 1987, p. 6). There are many factors associated with dropping out. It is evident that who dropouts are and the reasons why they drop out are closely related. The strongest predictors of who will drop out are academic failure, low socioeconomic status (Alexander, Natriello, & Pallas, 1985; Cervantes, 1965); low self-esteem, more children in the family than the parents can control, single parent families, parents with low levels of education (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollach, & Roch, 1986); failure of one or more school years, father figure weak or absent (Cervantes, 1965); a low sense of efficacy for acquiring cognitive skills (Schunk, 1985); and external locus of control (Liebert, Wicks-Nelson, & Kail, 1986). Furthermore, the reasons why students drop out of school are related to low self-concept, poor academic performance, feelings of peer alienation, low socioeconomic status, broken homes, low educational

level of one or both parents, a large number of younger siblings (Mertens, 1982); pregnancy, patterns of absenteeism, low rates of participation in extracurricular activities, a need for money (Beekman, 1987); below average intelligence, not reading at grade level, in trouble with the law, considers her/himself poorly treated by teachers and administrators (Schrieber, 1988); and sees little reason to persist in school since educational outcome is not under their control (Liebert et al., 1986).

Dropouts affect society in various ways. They are constantly increasing the unemployment rate in the United States (Levin, 1972). One-fourth of all high school students drop out each year, but the number of jobs available for unskilled persons decreases each year while the number of people to fill them increases (Howard & Anderson, 1978). In addition, a great amount of criminal activity is associated with dropping out of school. Police statistics indicate that dropouts make up about 85 percent of the inmates in state and federal prisons that are supported by taxpayers' money (Mertens, 1982). Furthermore, the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1983) data reveal that the difference in expected lifetime earnings from ages 19 to 64 between a male high

school graduate and a dropout in 1979 was more than $250,000. In a comprehensive study of the dropout problem, Levin (1972) reported 7 social consequences of failing to complete high school to be:

1. Foregone national income;
2. Foregone tax revenues for the support of government services;
3. Increased demand for social services;
4. Increased crime;
5. Reduced political participation;
6. Reduced intergenerational mobility; and
7. Poorer levels of health. (p. 10)

Rumberger (1987) stated that society suffers because of unemployment in that an individual's lost earnings lower tax revenues and increase demands on governmentally supported social services.

Ekstrom et al. (1986) collected follow-up information in 1982 on 1980 dropouts and found that 47 percent were working full- or part-time, 10 percent were enrolled in job training courses, 16 percent were homemakers, 3 percent were in military services, and 29 percent were looking for work. Schrieber (1988) reported that in the United States almost a million young people will continue to quit school each year. In

Louisiana alone, 9 percent left in grade 7, 12 percent left in grade 8, and 20 percent left in grade 9, a total of 41 percent, who dropped out of school to enter the world of work with less than 9 years of formal schooling. Also, results from this research have shown that at least 50 percent of the dropouts remain unemployed up to a year after leaving school. It was concluded that although many dropouts indicate that they will return to school to graduate, few do so (Schrieber, 1988).

Ekstrom et al. (1986) noted that these findings have significant implications for developing policies and programs to deal with the dropout problem. Further, many programs are needed to meet the needs of the diverse dropout population, such as programs to help pregnant teenagers stay in school, programs to motivate youths who are dissatisfied with the school environment, and programs that combine education with work for the economically disadvantaged (Ekstrom et al., 1986). It is also important to identify potential dropouts prior to high school and begin intervention when the first behavioral signs (e.g., poor grades, poor attendance, grade failure, disciplinary problems) are noted (Howard & Anderson, 1978).

Phlegar (1987) stated that poverty and schooling are related and that students' academic problems cannot be separated from their home environments and socioeconomic status. Underachievers in school tend to come from homes in which many of these characteristics are present: parents have little education, single parent families, single working mothers, and families of large size (Torrance, 1967). Low-achieving students, mainly from low income households, tend to display a lower commitment to school as indicated by high absenteeism rates before dropping out (Alexander et al., 1985).

In a study based on dropouts completed by Dade County Grand Jury (1984), it was found that 4 out of every 10 adolescents who entered the ninth grade did not graduate. Although many were leaving in grades 9 or 10, they were only reading at the fifth grade level. It was repeatedly found throughout this study that the dropouts came from lower socioeconomic class homes. Many experienced isolation in school and were exposed to other dropouts within their communities. The Dade County report further indicated that without a doubt it was difficult for adolescents to become involved in

school when their family was struggling to make ends meet at home.

Students who underachieve academically suffer significant losses in self-esteem and those who experience success are likely to develop positive feelings about their abilities (Purkey, 1970). Academic achievement and leadership experience are two of the in-school experiences that can foster growth of self-esteem (J. S. Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982). Research indicates that lower performance leads to lower expectations which leads to lower achievement (Dade County Grand Jury, 1984). The data do not provide evidence about which comes first--a high self-esteem or academic success, a low self-esteem or academic failure--but indicates a strong reciprocal relationship and gives reason to believe that enhancing self-esteem will influence improvement in academic performance (Purkey, 1970).

The development of self-esteem among adolescents has always been of great interest to educators but should not be thought of as a single problem--rather, as a global one which requires that home and school life be combined (Alawiye & Alawiye, 1984). Dixon (1986) takes this one step further in that self-esteem not only

affects students' school performance and personal life, but it affects their social adjustment and career development as well. However, Holly (1987) stated that educators must forget about self-esteem as a goal in itself and help adolescents focus on being the best that they can be in pursuit of things that are most worth doing. The point here is that doing a thing cannot make adolescents feel proud unless they see a value in it that is independent of its ability to make them feel proud. For if they see the value of the thing itself, then they will already have a motive to achieve it (Holly, 1987).

Adolescents' self-esteem is a by-product of doing things that they regard as being worthwhile, and the greatest concern should be for them to become citizens who are worthy of high esteem. "Without self-esteem, students are susceptible to becoming dropouts, to abusing drugs and alcohol, even to considering suicide" (Holly, 1987, p. 1). Furthermore, adolescents with low opinions of themselves cannot be expected to be happy with or effective in their studies, careers, and lives (Holly, 1987).

Adolescents who exhibit low self-esteem tend to exhibit an external locus of control (Bailey, 1987).

Externally oriented adolescents achieve less than adolescents who have an internal locus of control. Those adolescents who are externally oriented feel less in control of their own lives and accept less responsibility or credit for their actions, blaming others more, and feeling impotent, helpless, and worthless. Along with this, externalizers see no relationship between their efforts and their achievement and often distrust adults and authority figures in general (Holly, 1987).

Tomlinson (1987) considers locus of control to be a primary factor in the difference between students' high and low achievement. Internal locus of control is associated with the success in school, and external locus of control is associated with learned helplessness. Externalizers may see little reason to initiate, persist, or modify their behavior, since they believe the outcome is not under their control (Liebert et al., 1986). Finally, individuals who develop with little expectation that life's satisfactions and misfortunes can be determined by their own effort--predominantly lower socioeconomic status individuals--are less apt to exert themselves or to

persist over lengthy time intervals in the pursuit of distant goals (Tomlinson, 1987).

Research indicates that the adolescent's perception of locus of control (internal/external) is related to self-esteem (Bailey, 1987). Locus of control was found to be related to several aspects of classroom behavior also (Madonna, 1987). According to Keith (1985), socioeconomic status and ability may influence both self-esteem and achievement. Furthermore, self-esteem is related to locus of control in that adolescents with a higher self-esteem tend to have a more internal locus of control. Keith (1985) concludes that programs designed to produce a more internal locus of control, if successful, may also have a positive impact on achievement.

Programs are needed to lower the dropout rate, thereby addressing and trying to overcome the deficiencies identified by research. As a state-supported institution, Nicholls State University has sought to assist in lowering the rate of dropouts by developing a model program for low income youths residing in Assumption, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes. This program is funded through the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 which provides federal

money to "establish programs to prepare youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force and to afford job training to those economically disadvantaged individuals" (p. 1324).

The Nicholls State - Youth Opportunities Unlimited (NS-YOU) summer program was designed by Nicholls State University administrators and faculty to address the dropout problem among adolescents from low income families. This program gives remediation, counseling, and job training to 14 and 15 year-old adolescents before they choose to leave school, rather than after they have departed. Unlike other dropout prevention programs, this program takes the adolescents out of their environments and houses them 24 hours a day on the Nicholls campus for 7 weeks.

The goal of the NS-YOU program is to help these adolescents from low socioeconomic backgrounds remain in school and receive a high school diploma. It works to accomplish this by providing intensive academic assistance (reading and mathematics), promoting positive self-esteem, and reinforcing the belief that one has control over the events or outcome of events in her/his life. The program also addresses pre-employment skills,

on-the-job training, social skills, career counseling, and personal counseling and growth.

NS-YOU 1989 Summer Program Results

Subjects

The subjects included 60 adolescents (30 NS-YOU participants; 30 control group participants) between the ages of 14 and 15 years old. All participants were from Assumption, Lafourche, or Terrebonne parish.

Instrumentation

Both the NS-YOU and control group participants were pretested before the NS-YOU program began and posttested 7 weeks later at the termination of the program. The tests that were administered to each group were the reading and mathematics subtests of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1981a), the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) (Coopersmith, 1981b), and the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale) (Rotter, 1966). The CTBS pretest used was Level H, Form U and the posttest was Level H, Form V.

Results

A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of Groups (NS-YOU vs. control) X Time (pretest vs. posttest) was completed for each of the 4 tests administered. Results

indicated that there were some statistically reliable differences. The critical F ratio for these ANOVAs is $F(1,58)=4.00$, $p<.05$. Means and standard deviations are reported in Table 1.

In analyzing the data for the reading scores, neither the main effect of Groups nor Time was significant. However, interaction effects between Groups and Time were significant ($F=44.53$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). This significance occurred because the mean test scores for the NS-YOU group increased while those for the control group decreased (means are provided in Table 1).

The results of the ANOVA with regard to the mathematics scores showed that the main effect of Groups was not significant. However, the main effect of Time was found to be significant ($F=21.05$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). The posttest scores ($M=7.70$) were lower than those of the pretest scores ($M=8.36$). Interaction effects between Groups and Time were significant ($F=45.78$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). The mean scores for the control group decreased from pretest to posttest while those of the NS-YOU group increased (means are provided in Table 1).

The main effect of Groups on the self-esteem inventory was not significant. However, the main effect of Time was significant ($F=17.65$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). The

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Pretest and Posttest Scores of the NS-YOU and Control Groups

	NS-YOU				Control			
	Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
Test	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
CTBS Reading Subtest	6.29	1.29	7.39	1.48	8.04	2.11	6.56	1.51
CTBS Math Subtest	8.06	1.82	8.37	1.76	8.65	1.81	7.02	1.54
Self-Esteem Inventory	68.80	13.35	65.40	13.86	69.00	15.93	54.57	11.59
Rotter's I-E Scale	10.33	2.52	10.47	3.14	10.10	3.50	13.63	2.33

Note: NS-YOU Group (N=30); Control Group (N=30).

posttest scores (M=59.98) were lower than those of the pretest scores (M=68.90). Interaction effects between Groups and Time were significant ($F=6.75$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). Both groups had a decrease in scores on the posttest, but the NS-YOU group decreased an average of M=3.40 while the control group decreased an average of M=14.43.

On ratings of locus of control, the main effect of Groups was significant ($F=6.76$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). The control group scored higher (M=11.87, more external) than the NS-YOU group (M=10.40, less external). The main effect of Time was significant ($F=12.65$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). The posttest scores for both groups were higher (M=12.05, more external) than the pretest scores (M=10.22, less external). Interaction effects between Groups and Time were significant ($F=10.87$, $df=1$, $p<.05$). Both the NS-YOU and control group had an increase (more external) on posttest scores. The control group had an increase of M=3.53 while the increase for the NS-YOU group was only M=0.14.

Discussion

As indicated by their scores, the NS-YOU group either made gains or maintained functioning levels in all areas while participating in the NS-YOU program. During the same time period, the control group decreased

in all areas. During the NS-YOU program areas of reading and mathematics were addressed. Each participant received 3 hours of reading and 1 hour of mathematics instruction daily for 30 class days. Self-esteem and locus of control were not addressed directly and are seen as by-products of participation in the NS-YOU program.

In academic areas of reading and mathematics, the NS-YOU group's scores increased while the control group's scores decreased. In the area of self-esteem, both groups' scores decreased (lower self-esteem) with the NS-YOU group's scores decreasing only slightly while those of the control group decreased drastically. In the area of locus of control, the NS-YOU group's scores indicated that they maintained their level of locus of control while those of the control group increased indicating a more external locus of control.

The NS-YOU program was effective in that it helped participants make gains in areas of reading and mathematics while the participants in the control group showed dramatic losses in these areas. The NS-YOU group maintained levels of self-esteem and locus of control while participating in the NS-YOU program, whereas the

control group showed much lower levels of self-esteem and more external locus of control. Therefore, the NS-YOU program was effective because even if the NS-YOU participants simply maintained their functioning levels in areas of self-esteem and locus of control, this was better than the decreases of the control group in these areas. Overall, the immediate effects of the NS-YOU program proved to be positive and helpful to the participants.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine if over a 6-month period of time, the NS-YOU participants will maintain gains made during the 1989 7-week summer program and how they compare with the control group in the areas of academic achievement, self-esteem, and locus of control. This study is important, for if the NS-YOU participants can retain the gains they made during the program, these adolescents may have a greater chance of receiving a high school diploma and have a better chance of entering the workforce as productive members of society. These adolescents may be able to break the family cycles of welfare and family federal aid if they can support themselves and their families as responsible adults. If the gains are not retained, the

study may help identify areas of weakness in the program which can later be addressed.

This study proposes to answer the following questions:

1. Will the NS-YOU group and control group differ significantly in the areas of reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control as measured by standardized tests?
2. Will the posttest scores and 6-month follow-up test scores differ significantly in the areas of reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control as measured by standardized tests?
3. Will the Group variable (NS-YOU group and control group) interact with time of test (posttest and 6-month follow-up test) to determine scores in reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses are stated in the null form. All hypotheses will be tested at the .05 level of significance using a two-way ANOVA of Groups (NS-YOU vs. control) X Time (posttest vs. 6-month follow-up test).

With regard to scores obtained for each dependent

variable (reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control) on a posttest and 6-month follow-up test:

1. There will be no significant main effect of Groups.
2. There will be no significant main effect of Time.
3. There will be no significant interaction effects between Groups and Time.

Definition of Terms

Academic Achievement is defined by Hotchkiss and Dorsten (1985) as grades in school and verbal and math test scores. Academic achievement is based on the quality and quantity of a student's work in the mathematical and reading areas. It is considered the index of an adolescent's educational behavior. Dave (1963) defined academic achievement as the performance of an adolescent in the different subjects of study in school. This performance is generally estimated by a suitable battery of standardized achievement tests for the purpose of uniformity and reliability. Academic achievement is operationally defined as a score on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1981a).

Self-Esteem, according to Coopersmith (1981a), is the evaluation which the individual makes and maintains with regard to her/himself. This evaluation expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes her/himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy. It is a "subjective experience which is conveyed to others verbally and through overt expressive behavior" (p. 5). Coopersmith (1981b) states that self-esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness expressed in the attitudes a person holds toward the self. Hotchkiss and Dorsten (1985) define self-esteem as:

1. taking a positive attitude toward oneself,
2. belief that one is "of equal worth" (to the next person),
3. belief that one can do things as well as others,
4. satisfaction with oneself,
5. agreement that one is "good" (reflected), and
6. agreement that one is proud of oneself (reflected). (p. 97)

Operationally, self-esteem is defined as a score on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories (Coopersmith, 1981b).

Locus of Control "is a term that Rotter uses to describe the extent to which people believe that their behavior determines their outcomes" (Shaffer, 1988, p. 202). Shaffer (1988) states that a student may fall into one of the following two categories:

1. Internalizers are those students that assume that they are usually responsible for what happens to them.
2. Externalizers are those students that believe that their outcomes depend more on luck, fate, or the actions of others than on their own abilities and efforts.

Operationally, locus of control will be defined as an external (E) score on the I-E Scale (Rotter, 1966).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of selected literature and research relevant to this study. The concepts to be reviewed will include dropout research relevant to the current study with special attention to the role of low socioeconomic status in creating dropouts. A discussion of how academic achievement, self-esteem, and locus of control are related to the dropout and low socioeconomic status will also be provided. Each topic will be discussed in detail.

The Dropout

The problem of dropping out of school is not a new one to our nation. "By 1823, two years after the opening of the first publicly supported high school in America, 76 of the entering class of 176 had dropped out" (Mertens, 1982, p. 1). Unfortunately, the dropout problem has not changed much in the past 166 years. National statistics indicate that one out of four people who currently enter the ninth grade do not graduate from high school (Gabriel & Anderson, 1987). In the state of Louisiana approximately half of all ninth grade students who enroll in the public high schools do not graduate four years later (Gary, 1987). The attrition rate for

Louisiana was 33.5% in 1972, 36.0% in 1982, and 43.3% in 1984 (Rumberger, 1987).

Most dropouts have serious educational deficiencies that limit their economic and social well-being throughout their adult lives. Individual consequences lead to social costs of billions of dollars (Rumberger, 1987). "In the fall of 1985, there were 3.8 million 18 to 24 year-olds who had quit school before earning a diploma" (Wetzel, 1987, p. 16). One out of every ten youths who drop out will return to school within a year. These returning adolescent dropouts tend to be from higher income families or from families where the parents were more highly educated or held professional jobs (Wetzel, 1987).

Background factors associated with dropping out are low income status, poor academic achievement, single-parent families, and large families (Ekstrom et al., 1986). Gabriel and Anderson (1987) listed three categories in which dropouts fall and listed characteristics for each. First are background characteristics which include single parent families, teenage mothers, ethnic origin, poverty status, limited English, parents' low educational level, and low birth weight. Second is school performance which includes low

grades, low test scores, illiteracy, low attendance or tardiness, high rates of suspension or expulsion, and lack of participation in school activities. Finally, there is social behavior which includes drug and alcohol abuse, arrests, suicide attempts, low self-esteem, and poor attitudes toward school.

The dropout problem is one of a constant and ongoing cycle of despair. Hathaway and Rhodes (1979) noted that the low-income family is forced to live in poor rental accommodations. Because of the lack of books and magazines in the home the child is poorly prepared upon entering school. As a result of the child's poor preparation, the school system cannot meet the extensive needs of this child. This child experiences academic failure which leads to the development of a poor self-concept. With poor motivation, academic achievement, and self-concept, the adolescent drops out of school. The individual then finds only low-paying jobs or unemployment. The result now is a second generation of children who have no better prospects than the first one had (Hathaway & Rhodes, 1979).

An adolescent's performance in school contributes to the likelihood of her/his completing high school and

becoming a productive member of the work force. Academic achievement is a strong indicator of dropping out. Low achieving students are far more likely to drop out. Dropouts are also likely to have low attendance rates and little or no participation in school activities. Therefore, the more engaged in school activities the adolescent is, the less likely she/he is to drop out (Gabriel & Anderson, 1987).

Participation in school activities gives adolescents a role, a conversation piece, an identification, a comradeship, a support for academic orientation, a feeling of kinship with the administration and their goals, a sense of accomplishment, a chance for self-development, and recognition. The adolescents become participants rather than a detached observers. They become emotionally committed and feel that they belong (Cervantes, 1965).

Dropouts display less commitment to school before dropping out as indicated by high levels of absenteeism (Alexander et al., 1985) and report doing less homework (Ekstrom et al., 1986). Dropping out of school has its most severe negative effects on disadvantaged students (Alexander et al., 1985). Almost a million young people will continue to quit school each year if schools fail

to stimulate their desire to learn. In the nation's 15 larger cities, 60 percent of the tenth grade students from poverty-stricken neighborhoods drop out before finishing high school (Schrieber, 1988).

Dropouts perform much more poorly on achievement tests than those who stay in school. But these differences are already quite obvious before the dropout withdraws from school (Alexander et al., 1985). Because of their low level of academic skills, many high school dropouts find it difficult to secure steady employment and an adequate income (Rumberger, 1987). The worst consequences of failure are perhaps in acquiring the habit of failing and coming to accept oneself as a failure (O'Brien, 1972).

As might be expected, there is a high correlation between dropping out of school and being two or three years over the age for that grade level (Wax & Wax, 1964). Problems in reading and math are widely recognized characteristics of dropouts. Three out of four dropouts admit to having trouble in reading and spelling. Three times as many poor readers as good readers dropped out before graduation from high school. The average dropout is 2 years behind in reading. Dropouts also have difficulty with abstract reasoning

and concepts, analyzing and inferring relationships, and being able to memorize or retain information (Howard & Anderson, 1978).

Studies of high school dropouts indicate that measures of academic performance such as reading and math scores, the number of times a student has been held over, and behavioral characteristics such as disciplinary problems, suspensions, and class cutting can be used to predict which students will drop out of high school. Some studies also found a relationship between the probability of dropping out of school and the educational attainment of the parents (New York City Board of Education, 1986).

Socially disadvantaged learners are those who fail to develop their vocabulary because, in relation to the normal learner, they experience family conversation that fails to answer their questions with well-developed answers. As a result, they often have poor auditory and visual discrimination and inferior judgement of time, number, and other basic concepts (Hathaway & Rhodes, 1979).

The cognitive development of minority youth during the summer months usually declines. Since most adolescents do not participate in formal class training

during the summer, it was found that minority adolescent test scores decline during this time period (Alexander et al., 1985). For these minority groups, schools play an important role in fostering their cognitive development. Schooling compensates for cognitive deficits occurring in the home and community environment (Alexander et al., 1985).

The characteristic of low socioeconomic status is most strongly related to dropping out (Ekstrom et al., 1986). Dropouts are largely from lower-income households (Alexander et al., 1985). According to a study done by Fine (1986), most adolescents leaving high school cited their reason for leaving as their families' need for money. Furthermore, the lower class adolescents are not prepared to be studious, obedient, or docile when they come into conflict with the middle class teacher. Lower class adolescents are not prepared to conform to the academic and informal requirements of the school system as are their middle class counterparts. Whereas the middle-class emphasis is on order and discipline, the lower-class emphasis is on the avoidance of trouble, a search for excitement, and a desire for independence from external controls (Howard & Anderson, 1978).

Below are identified some of the complications that arise because of low income.

1. These children suffer many cultural disadvantages which affect intellectual development and interfere with social development.
2. Disadvantaged children are retarded before entering school (i.e. they have not learned middle-class concepts).
3. Their lack of environmental stimulation results in slow cognitive, locomotor, and social development. (Hathaway & Rhodes, 1979)

Research on the family income of adolescents shows that the likelihood of adolescents being in school increased with family income. Adolescents from lower income families were somewhat less likely to be in the labor force and if in the labor force, much more likely to be unemployed (Young, 1979).

Low income and the level of educational aspirations tend to correlate positively with one another. The direct relationship that existed between poverty, nutrition and health, underemployment, unemployment and low education achievement 60 years ago is still clearly evident today (Thomas, 1986). Students from poor

families, regardless of race, are three to four times more likely to drop out than those from more affluent households (Wetzel, 1987).

One out of fifty of the very wealthy class do not finish high school, and one out of two of the very poor class do not finish. By far the largest proportion of the dropouts, eight out of nine, come from the lowest social class. A very small proportion come from the middle social class, but 64 percent and 75 percent of the two lowest social classes drop out of school before the age of 16. The percentage of dropouts increases sharply with each downward step on the socio-economic ladder. On the top rung (the upper-upper class) one out of fifty youths failed to finish high school; on the second rung (the lower-upper class) one out of ten failed to finish; on the third rung (the upper-middle class) one out of six failed to finish; on the fourth and fifth rungs (the lower-middle and upper-lower classes) one out of four failed to finish; on the lowest rung one out of two youths failed to complete high school (Cervantes, 1965).

Dropouts tend to come from homes with a weaker educational support system (Ekstrom et al., 1986). A family-related characteristic associated with dropping

out of school is the educational attainment of the adults in their family and the community in general (Gabriel & Anderson, 1987). Lower educational attainment is associated with a number of other conditions: fewer study aids in their homes, less opportunity for non-school related learning, less likely to have both natural parents living with them, parents have low levels of formal education, parents have low levels of educational aspirations, and parents are less likely to be interested in the adolescent's activities both in and out of school (Ekstrom et al., 1986). There is little family activity outside the home. For many adolescents this means they have never been to the country, to another city, or even out of their neighborhood (Torrance, 1967).

An adolescent's attitude toward schooling is developed and nurtured first in the home and then in the community (Schrieber, 1988). There are many problems within the family unit of adolescents who are dropouts. Their parents have been divorced, deserted, or remarried. This is also true of the family friends. Divorce and desertion are taken permissively by the dropout as an inescapable part of a lifestyle lacking personal responsibility components (Cervantes, 1965).

Many more dropouts than graduates come from broken homes, and evidence seems to indicate that a sizable portion of the physically intact homes of the dropouts are psychologically broken (Schrieber, 1988).

Because of an increasingly technological society, a larger and ever-increasing proportion of the productive population must be highly trained in very complex skills. There is less and less place for unskilled laborers in the productive segment of any modern industrial society; in fact, the unskilled become more and more dependent, and less and less productive (Pedersen & Barrados, 1968).

The lack of educational credentials places the dropout at a disadvantage in competition with the majority of their peers who hold either a high school or college diploma. Some of the same factors that cause adolescents to drop out of school also keep them out of the work force. Unemployment rates among adolescents were highest for those in families with low-incomes (Young, 1979).

No longer are most available jobs for the unskilled. Today these jobs constitute only 17 percent of the positions in our labor market, and it is predicted this percentage will decline each year. The

times as likely to have white collar jobs than employed dropouts (Howard & Anderson, 1978).

Jobs are increasing at a snail's pace, about 550,000 per year, whereas the size of the labor force is increasing at about 1,300,000 per year (J. S. Coleman, 1965). Automation is shifting whole industries out of unskilled or semi-skilled labor sectors. A prime example is the chemical industry, where production now requires skilled attendants for control systems and has decreasing use for semi-skilled laborers. Another example is the more efficient methods of marketing, as in discount stores and supermarkets, which have much larger sales volume per employee than a few years ago. Even natural economic growth from consumer goods will do little for the unemployed youth, for a larger and larger proportion of consumer goods are produced and sold without the aid of unskilled or semiskilled (J. S. Coleman, 1965).

Adolescents face a much more competitive labor market, and dropouts carry an extra set of negative labels and gravitate to the bottom of employers' hiring lists (Wetzel, 1987).

Society suffers because unemployment and lost earnings lower tax revenues and increase demands on

social services (Rumberger, 1987). The societal impact includes foregone tax dollars and possibly increased welfare and prison expenses (Mertens, 1982).

A high school education is a basic prerequisite for an adolescent to become a responsible citizen, for maintaining a way of life, and in order to successfully enter into the complex world of work today. The freedom and security of the United States are threatened when our youth are not "educated to their maximum potential" (Howard & Anderson, 1978, p. 221). One-third of employed dropouts reported earning less than minimum wage (Beekman, 1987).

Economists estimated that for the city of Chicago alone its 13,000 high school dropouts would cost taxpayers $60 million a year for the next 40 years. For the state of Oregon the estimate is for over $73 million per year, and nearly $3 billion over the entire lifetime of this group (Gabriel & Anderson, 1987).

Police statistics indicate that dropouts are 6 to 10 times more likely to be involved in crime than in-school students (Mertens, 1982). One of every 20 persons arrested for a violent crime is less than 15 years old, and one in seven property crime arrests is a person less than 15. The majority of the offenders are

from poverty-stricken backgrounds; they are no longer enrolled in school; they are unemployed; and, when employed, they have low-paying jobs. Total expenditures to staff, operate, and maintain public juvenile facilities totaled over $1.8 billion in 1984. The average cost to house one resident for a year was $25,200 (Wetzel, 1987).

About 42 percent of prison inmates have high school diplomas. Approximately 625,000 juveniles are incarcerated each year in a juvenile detention facility. The majority of these youths probably are academically behind their peers, and many have already dropped out of school (Wetzel, 1987).

The social impacts of the drop out due to undereducation are many:

1. Mail is no longer safe and secure. Boxes are burglarized and checks and valuables are stolen.
2. Property is vandalized.
3. Establishments are victims of robbery and extortion.
4. Robbery and rape are common and many people fear to walk the street day or night.

5. Homes are invaded and ransacked and the occupants beaten, kidnapped or killed. (Hathaway & Rhodes, 1979, p. 6)

An inadequate tax base assures the schools in low-income districts of substandard teacher salaries so that, for the most part, tired or inexperienced teachers are attracted (Torrance, 1967). The costs of an inadequate education include the costs of maintaining the unemployed. The costs resulting from an inadequate education far outweigh the costs that would have been incurred in providing an adequate education. Educational programs developed to keep adolescents in school, if successful, are an extremely good social investment. There may be up to a six-fold return on these investments (Hathaway & Rhodes, 1979).

It seems quite plausible that the minority of tomorrow, the high school dropouts, will have more difficulty climbing out of the basement of their poverty than had the minorities of the past. The age of automation has replaced the uneducated workers with sophisticated machines which will make the uneducated of tomorrow the social pariah and community rejects. Automation is steadily wiping out the jobs done by

low-skilled persons who want any kind of work. For someone without a high school diploma, the going will be very rough indeed. The dropouts' problems make them a public liability; their lack of funds become a public debt constituting a severe financial burden on the community in which they reside (Cervantes, 1965).

Academic Achievement

The task of providing equal and adequate educational opportunities to all children, regardless of social class, is one in which schools have not been very successful. Lower-class adolescents have been found to show poorer academic achievement than their middle-class peers. Disadvantaged adolescents performed more poorly as they progressed through school. Differences in academic achievement between middle-class and lower-class adolescents become greater as they spend more years in school (Bartel, 1971). J. S. Coleman (1965) feels that the concept of real education is one of self-responsibility. People who can take care of themselves can be both economically and socially independent and will have the necessities they needs for living. If this can be done in a wide variety of circumstances, then they have a higher level of real education (J. S. Coleman, 1965).

The home produces the first, most insistent, and perhaps, most subtle influence on the educational development of the child (Dave, 1963). The family, not the child's ability, seems to be one of the primary influences on whether adolescents achieved their career goals. Parental attitudes were the most significant factor in adolescents' satisfaction with life at the time they began taking on adult responsibilities. There is considerable evidence from prior research that the level of educational attainment is the best single predictor of youth occupational achievement. It is contended that youth achievement motivation is an important predictor of educational and occupational achievement. This study finds that occupational achievement motivation is a strong predictor of both educational and occupational attainment (Schiamberg & Chin, 1987).

Research indicates that children and adolescents from lower social classes are, on the whole, more likely to hold anti-school and anti-education attitudes than those from middle-class backgrounds. Culturally deprived children and their parents have basically a positive attitude towards education, but a negative attitude towards schools and teachers because they are

not convinced that schools and teachers are truly interested or concerned. Parental attitudes are mirrored in their children. A considerable number of adolescents come to school with negative attitudes towards it, and these attitudes are continually reinforced by parents and older brothers and sisters (Wall, 1968).

Etzioni (1983) considers the family the first educational institution; all other institutions build on the family's educational achievements or must remedy its failures. The family, by setting patterns and providing services for its members, reduces demands on the state as long as it functions well by itself. The family is given the essential task of education primarily because children are formed by families first. Undereducation in the family tends to affect the child and all training institutions that follow the family. If the family does not provide the needed foundations, schools become overloaded and cease to perform their role. In turn, adolescents drop out of schools and further overload other components of society such as the work place, the court system, and other social agencies (Etzioni, 1983).

The parent is responsible for meeting the psychological needs of the child from birth until six

years of age and preferably until the end of adolescence. Parents who are overworked, habitually drunk or drugged, or consumed by their own problems are unable to provide the basic parenting needed. If the family does not meet the basic parenting needs, the child enters school as an underdeveloped person (Etzioni, 1983).

Etzioni (1983) sees the school as the second educational institution in a sequence of personality development after the family. Phlegar (1987) further states that the educational problems of adolescents cannot be separated from their low socioeconomic status. Learning is based on sound socio-emotional development. The way adolescents feel about themselves and others provides the foundation for their future learning. Adolescents remember the feelings of both good and bad events. These emotions will affect their later learning (Phlegar, 1987).

A major reason for low achievement among adolescents in poor neighborhoods is the low expectation held by the teachers as to their learning capacity. Teachers often perceive these students as challenging of authority (Torrance, 1967). In addition, potential dropouts are less respected than their classmates by

their teachers, and thus they often express hostility toward teachers and authority figures (Kizziar & Hagedorn, 1979). A teacher's increased understanding of the adolescent's home background will substantially enhance the school's potential for aiding such adolescents (Torrance, 1967).

Adolescents in our society quickly learn to assume that their worth as human beings depends heavily on their ability to achieve. This belief is first laid down in the home and then hardened to conviction in the schools. It is for this reason that learning becomes a potential threat, for should students fail to achieve or to live up to the expectations of others, they risk rejection and loss of esteem. It is in these competitive situations that defensive strategies produce apathy, mediocrity, and failure itself. Failure can act as an important factor in motivating achievement as long as the failure is interpreted properly and does not become a way of life (Covington & Beery, 1976).

Wishing to learn merely because their peers do and it is expected of them is not enough reason for potential dropouts. Learning may be resisted by them simply because avoidance of success quiets anxiety and brings the adolescent momentary peace. Symptoms of

failure bring the dropout some advantage no matter how self-defeating it may appear to others. Frequently, potential dropouts react to excessive parental demands for achievement by avoiding reading or learning in other subjects. In addition to feelings of despair, they may transfer hostility felt for a rejecting mother to the teacher, using a learning situation to punish the parent (Torrance, 1967).

Eliminating failure entirely from students' experiences is no kindness; it prepares them for a world that does not exist (Torrance, 1967). Covington and Beery (1976) observe that schools must encourage rather than discourage different kinds of excellence. Success experiences become more a matter of exceeding one's own present standards rather than of surpassing the performance of others. Realistic goal setting fosters both increased feelings of success and increased competency. By a combination of realistic goal setting, task analysis, and proper effort, the student's sense of success grows, her/his actual performance increases, and so does the conviction that she/he is personally responsible for these changes (Covington & Beery, 1976).

Liebert et al. (1986) state that one of the clearest facts about achievement is its association with

socioeconomic status. In general, the lower an adolescent's socioeconomic background in terms of parents' income and employment status, the less the adolescent achieves in school and later in life. Lower-class families accept their status quo and view the rules as unquestionable and appropriate. Middle-class families, in contrast, are thought to be person-oriented. One of the more striking results is that person orientation increases with social class (Liebert et al., 1986).

Many adolescents do poorly in school simply because what the school is doing seems irrelevant to themselves and their world. Adolescents who consider themselves as failures at school will reject or distort evidence which contradicts their perceived self, no matter how flattering the information may be or how helpful it may appear from another person's point of view. Unsuccessful adolescents, whether underachievers, nonachievers, or poor readers, are likely to hold attitudes about themselves and their abilities which are pervasively negative. They tend to see themselves as less able, less adequate, and less self-reliant than their more successful peers (Purkey, 1970).

Fearing that they lack sufficient ability, the disadvantaged despair of succeeding well enough in the future, especially since they have it on good authority from older brothers and sisters that school gets harder rather than easier. If they cannot avoid failure, then they can at least attempt to avoid a sense of failure in the face of this inevitable outcome. They can use a number of ingenious strategies such as procrastination to which they attribute failure. In effect, they can argue that other things caused their poor performance, and the performance is not representative of what they can really do and therefore is not a fair measure of their ability (Covington & Beery, 1976).

The irony of all this is that by their own actions the failure-avoiding adolescents may actually set up overt failure in their desperate attempts to avoid feelings of failure. Thus these adolescents become their own worst enemy. They continue to harbor doubts about their ability because they are unwilling to test their limits by trying their hardest (Covington & Beery, 1976).

Tragically, these adolescents not only fail to enhance their sense of worth or ability but end up performing well below their actual level of competency.

These self-deceptions are easy to begin but difficult to reverse because they carry a momentum of their own. If academic failure becomes a chronic way of life for adolescents, then they will naturally come to regard themselves as poor students. But these attitudes and feelings are not the root cause of the problem, although they will eventually become part of the problem. Rather, they are the outcome of whatever conditions led to the lack of success originally. Thus, low motivation, negative self-attitudes, and failure are largely the result of improper learning conditions (Covington & Beery, 1976).

In recent years, educators have directed their attention to the problems of the underachiever. Academic underachievement can be recognized as early as the third grade and is considered to be a set pattern of behavior when the adolescent enters high school (Engle & Szyperski, 1965). Lower-class youngsters begin school so poorly equipped to keep up with the academic demands that initial failure is almost inevitable, and the total school experience becomes negatively rather than positively reinforced (Kizziar & Hagedorn, 1979). Thus, motivation shifts from learning to getting by (J. S. Coleman, 1965). These adolescents frequently reject

themselves and the school system (Kizziar & Hagedorn, 1979).

Underachievers tend to come from families where parents fail to see the adolescent as an individual separate from themselves. These parents act out their needs, fears, and ambitions on the adolescents as if these adolescents were extensions of themselves. Bright adolescents are seen as a threat and a competitor by parents. Parents regard the adolescent as someone who needs to be constantly put in her/his place. A pattern commonly found in the home of underachievers is the presence of a dominant, aggressive mother and a weak, ineffectual or absent father (Engle & Szyperski, 1965).

It has been recognized by educators and others that the home environment of the adolescent acts as one of the most powerful determinants in shaping her/his educational development (J. S. Coleman et al., 1982). The family makes significant contributions to the attainment of the adolescent's educational and occupational goals. Parental attitudes and perceptions of peers comprise an important part of the explanation. Parents at different occupational levels hold different expectations for their children. Parental expectations tend to be adopted by children, and children's

adolescents view themselves. Adolescents who experience repeated success in school are likely to develop positive feelings about their abilities, while those who encounter failure tend to develop negative views of themselves (Purkey, 1970).

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem refers to a person's feelings of self-worth (Coopersmith, 1975). This general feeling of self-worth comes from an integration of an individual's feelings in specific areas of competency. These areas are specific areas of self-esteem and include one's self-worth as it relates to her/his behaviors, physical appearance, academic performance, social interactions, and emotional self (Richman, 1984). Self-esteem is just how good one feels about oneself. What is ordinarily termed "internal control" or "fate control" is the degree to which one feels in control of those things one regards as important (J. S. Coleman et al., 1982).

The formation of self-esteem is a significant developmental achievement of the adolescent. Adolescents with high self-esteem tend to function more effectively in a variety of situations and perceive themselves as happy (Richman, 1984). The perceptions formed through experiences with and interpretations of

the environment are heavily influenced by reinforcements and evaluations by significant others (Schunk, Hanson, & Cox, 1987).

High self-esteem is essential to one's development as a human being. Without self-esteem, adolescents are susceptible to becoming dropouts, abusing drugs, or committing suicide (Holly, 1987). Educators and psychologists have looked for ways to better meet the needs of minority and low-income adolescents. One consideration has been to study the self-esteem of these adolescents. Self-esteem is believed to begin emerging early in life. One's self-esteem is unusually influenced by one's peers within the community environment, one's peers in the schools, and adult figures, namely teachers. Research has indicated that the self-esteem of low-income and minority adolescents is very often negative (Thornburg, 1971).

Adolescents from low socioeconomic homes tend to have low self-esteem. This low self-esteem results in the adolescents' negative self-image. Adolescents with low self-esteem or self-image also tend to have negative perceptions of school, which may in turn result in low academic achievement. Much research indicates that low self-esteem of adolescents from low-income families is

significantly related to variables that are indicative of lack of academic ability, motivation, or desire to change (Ford, 1985).

As low-income children progress through elementary school, they recognize their social class differences. As they further progress, these differences become more apparent, and the youths become less sure about themselves as individuals. This causes these adolescents to enter junior high school with traits such as poor self-esteem, frustration about poor school grades, limited ability to communicate, and disillusionment about school and its administrators (Thornburg, 1971).

Educators and researchers have recognized that there is a relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement. Students who feel good about themselves are usually high academic achievers, while the ones with low self-esteem tend to do poorly in school. Since the global concept of self-esteem encompasses one's whole self, when one area of self-esteem is affected, the entire self-esteem is affected. Thus, efforts to assist in the enhancement of self-esteem are limited by the necessity of prying into a student's home life (Alawiye & Alawiye, 1984).

Research indicates that self-esteem declines at the time of the youth's transition into adolescence and junior high school (Hirsch & Rapkin, 1987). Findings support that there are negative consequences for the adolescents' self-esteem when they must cope with several transitions at once (Simmons, Burgerson, Carlton-Ford, & Blyth, 1987). One of the adolescent's most basic developmental tasks is the establishment of self-identity (Dales & Keller, 1972). Adolescence is the time during which the youth's body undergoes the transformation from child to virtually adult stature and proportion. A wide variety of sexual characteristics develop for the first time during these years. These changes in their bodies must become incorporated into their views of themselves. Also, the adolescent begins to have changing relationships with significant others such as parents and peers. This process is one of detaching from parents and becoming established among their peers. These changes will determine with whom the adolescent will interact most frequently and how they will come to see themselves (Blyth & Traeger, 1983).

The research literature suggests a relationship between self-esteem and a number of other variables such as academic achievement, achievement motivation,

socioeconomic status, and delinquency. How adolescents perceive school has some bearing on how well or poorly they will perform in school. It is believed by educators that if students have a positive image of themselves, that positive perception may be transferred to other situations, namely the school setting (Ford, 1985).

Gurney (1987) also finds self-esteem to be positively associated with school achievement. Therefore, it is valuable to be able to raise or enhance the adolescent's level of self-esteem. Gurney (1987) stated that improvements in reading appeared to be associated with an increase in self-esteem scores. Remedial help in reading functions to enhance self-esteem as a by-product of such help. Self-esteem may be thus enhanced and show academic achievement improvement as a result. Evidence also exists that improvement in academic achievement precedes self-esteem enhancement. Gurney (1987) commented that self-esteem must be addressed with adolescents scoring very low in self-esteem because a minimal level of self-esteem must exist before any learning can take place. Furthermore, parents are very important to the development and

maintenance of their adolescent's self-esteem (Gurney, 1987).

Holly (1987) believes that self-esteem is the important element for the adolescent's happiness and academic success. Adolescents with low self-esteem are not happy or very effective in their school work. Students with high self-esteem tend to be happier and more successful. Those with low self-esteem tend to be depressed, which can be debilitating, and, therefore, they become less competent. High self-esteem can enhance academic success, and low self-esteem can be a cause of academic failure (Holly, 1987).

There seems to be consensus among researchers regarding the relationship between positive self-esteem and its effect upon academic performance. Adolescents from lower social classes tend to reflect the negative self-image that society holds for them. Adolescents with high school grades generally have higher self-esteem. Adolescents with excellent attendance records showed higher self-esteem than those with poor attendance records, a common indicator of a potential dropout (Munro & Oles, 1975).

Purkey (1970) theorizes that we do unto others as we have been done unto. So it happens that many small

children are crippled by parents who were themselves crippled psychologically as children. When parents are overburdened by their inadequacies, any additional demands by children produce anxiety. The intellectual development of these children is stunted because they are reared in a deprived atmosphere. The adolescent's self is weakened, distorted, and destroyed because participation with the meaningful people in their lives has given meanings to their self which are extensively belittling (Purkey, 1970).

Purkey (1970) concluded that any behavior of significant people that causes children to think ill of themselves, to feel inadequate, incapable, unworthy, unwanted, unloved, or unable, is crippling to the self. Where respect and warmth are missing, where the child's questions go unanswered, where offers to help are rejected, where discipline is based on failure and punishment, where they are excluded from the parents' emotional life, and where basic rights are abused, there the child's self is undermined (Purkey, 1970).

Torrance (1967) states that there is growing concern today for an increasing number of young people whose lack of self-esteem threatens their future. How adolescents feel about themselves and about their world

is important because the concept of self is manifested in a wide range of their behavior. Dropouts are found to be people lacking in ego strength and subject to feelings of low self-esteem. They are more negative in their attitudes toward themselves than their achieving peers. They also manifest stronger feelings of inferiority. Lack of self-discipline usually is demonstrated by their inability to complete unpleasant tasks. A need for immediate results on all activities indicates a difficulty in working toward distant goals (Torrance, 1967).

Negative experiences lead some adolescents to conclude that they are and will remain worthless. As a result, these adolescents see no point in trying to learn new concepts and skills. Despite efforts to emphasize their positive qualities, their negative self-image limits their success. The older the adolescents are, the more difficult it becomes for them to change. Adolescents with negative self-images do not often hear positive statements about themselves. Adolescents with low self-esteem may not even realize they have characteristics to be proud of. Or they may actually not have developed any strengths to feel good about. The sense of worthlessness that accompanies the

failure confirms and increases the existing negative self-concept (Borba & Borba, 1978).

An important quality of an individual's self, Purkey (1970) finds, is that it is wonderfully unique. Like fingerprints, no two people ever hold identical sets of beliefs about themselves. This uniqueness of the self, which makes for an infinite variety of personalities, helps to explain problems of communication. Since no two people ever see themselves or the world in the same way, it is difficult for them to agree about what they experience. A middle-aged, middle-class, white, female schoolteacher must work hard to understand the perceptual world of a black male youngster from the ghetto (Purkey, 1970).

A child's self-concept affects not only academic achievement and school performance, but personal and social adjustment and career development as well. Parent attitudes in the family environment, teacher attitudes in the school environment, and peer attitudes in the community environment all work together to form the child's self-concept and to influence her/his achievement (Purkey, 1970).

Self-esteem clearly, then, is an important factor in learning. People with low self-esteem are less

capable of resisting pressures to conform and are less able to perceive threatening stimuli. People with high self-esteem maintain a fairly constant image of their capabilities and move more directly and realistically toward their personal goals (Dixon, 1986).

Improvement in self-concept may facilitate improvement in other areas such as learning and achievement. If the self-concept is formed through experiences with the environment, interactions with significant others, and attributions of one's own behavior, then the classroom atmosphere may be influential in the development of a positive or negative self-concept in children (Bailey, 1987). Students' academic performance depends not only on how capable they are, but also on how capable they think they are (Padwal, 1984). A relationship between self-esteem and social class can be found in the social politics of the United States, where improvement in the self-esteem of minority and lower-class children has been a prominent goal of national education policies (Maruyama, Rubin, & Kingsbury, 1981).

Locus of Control

Lower class adolescents view themselves as passive agents in the world, unable to make changes in the

events that govern their lives. This belief in the ability to control one's destiny has been studied and described as an alienation or powerlessness. Locus of control and related beliefs about an adolescent's effectiveness in coping with the world around them are cultivated differently in lower- and middle-class adolescents. Locus of control has been negatively correlated with academic achievement in lower-class adolescents in junior high and high school. Locus of control is the construct which has been successfully measured and used to predict behavior in a variety of situations (Bartel, 1971).

Locus of control has been broadly conceived as a generalized belief that certain factors control the events of one's life. Internalizers believe that they are masters of their own fate, while externalizers hold the view that they are powerless in influencing their personal destinies (Brown, 1980). Findley and Cooper (1983) noted that most people fall on a continuum between the two extremes. Internalizers take pride in good outcomes and feel shame in bad outcomes, whereas externalizers experience less intense emotions. A positive relationship exists between locus of control and academic achievement (Findley & Cooper, 1983).

Liebert et al. (1986) agree that adolescents differ in the extent to which they believe that their own actions can influence the outcome of events. Some tend to assume that they are responsible for their success and failures; others tend to attribute responsibility to outside agents, luck, fate, and other people.

Adolescents who score high as internalizers tend to get better grades and to do better on achievement tests than do those who score high as externalizers. Internalizers may well show greater initiative and persistence in solving difficult problems and a willingness to modify their behavior to achieve desired goals. Externalizers may see little reason to initiate, persist, or modify their behavior, since they believe the outcome is not under their control. The most important factor that helps adolescents develop internal control seems to be encouraging their self-reliance and independence in a nonauthoritarian environment. The earlier in life adolescents are allowed to become independent, the more internal their locus of control orientation will be (Liebert et al., 1986).

Locus of control develops through interaction and experience with the environment, leading the individual to perceive control over the environment or to attribute

control of the environment, as previously noted, to luck, fate, chance, or powerful others. Adolescents exhibiting an external locus of control have an overall lower self-concept than those exhibiting an internal locus of control, indicating a higher overall self-concept in internally controlled adolescents (Bailey, 1987; Madonna, 1987).

According to the literature, internalizers consistently outperform their external counterparts in almost every study in which the two have been compared (D. G. Coleman, 1988). Research further indicates that internally oriented adolescents achieve more and are more socially competent than adolescents who have an external locus of control. Internalizers feel in control of their own lives, and therefore accept responsibility for their actions, blaming others less. They act from their own values for their own purposes. Adolescents with an external locus of control usually feel impotent, helpless, and worthless. They often do not trust adults, their institutions, and/or authority in general. They blame others for their failures. They see no relationship between their effort and their achievements (Holly, 1987).

Conger (1976) has shown that adolescents of high socioeconomic status were more internal than their middle socioeconomic counterparts. Furthermore, middle socioeconomic status adolescents were markedly more internal than their low socioeconomic counterparts (Conger, 1976). External locus of control has been associated with learned helplessness and with thinking that is tangible, focused, and compartmentalized (Tomlinson, 1987).

Learned helplessness results when adolescents believe that outcome has no relationship to their efforts, therefore resulting in a lack of persistence in assigned tasks. In contrast, internally controlled adolescents who consider consequences to be a function of their own behavior exercise cognitive processes that are more abstract, divergent, and generalized in nature (Tomlinson, 1987).

It has been determined that as self-esteem increases through adolescence and early adulthood, the perceived locus of control over oneself and one's environment becomes more internal. Internal adolescents generally tend to be effective and competent. The adolescents' perceived locus of control has been shown to shift in the internal direction as they successfully

master their environment and in the external direction as a function of failures to master their environment (Conger, 1976).

Sherman and Hofmann (1986) contend that locus of control becomes a more stable personality characteristic as an adolescent matures with experience. Locus of control develops over time and achieves stability in adulthood. Younger adolescents tend to be more external than older adolescents (Sherman & Hofmann, 1986). Adolescents who develop with little expectation that life's satisfactions and misfortunes can be determined by personal effort have been less apt to exert themselves or to persist over lengthy time intervals in the pursuit of distant goals (Tomlinson, 1987).

It is possible to help externalizers become more internalized by developing self-confidence and a sense of control over one's life through opportunities for success in skill development and learning. Students need to understand why education is important. The purpose, value, and relevance of what students learn and do should be clarified. They should be given real adult reasons for learning (Holly, 1987). Students who perceive themselves to be in control of their life are more successful in school. They feel that they are in

control of their own world (internal) instead of having fate determine their world (external) (Hughes, 1978).

In the world of work, externalizers tend to use a leadership style that is coercive in nature when dealing with fellow workers and subordinates. Internalizers tend to be more involved in their jobs by exerting more effort into what they do. They expect a greater link between their effort and performance with their reward. They are more effective in working with fellow workers and subordinates and tend to advance more quickly than externalizers. Internalizers tend to be more satisfied with participation while externalizers prefer direct supervision; in fact, they adjusted better to job situations requiring direction than do internalizers. Internalizers who were dissatisfied with their jobs were more likely to leave them than externalizers who were dissatisfied (Triandis & Hui, 1982). Because internalizers are more likely to view their own personal success or failure as dependent on their own behavior, they do more intensive job searching during periods of unemployment. The importance of this is the perceived link they make between their effort and the subsequent payoff (Becker & Hills, 1979).

Self-esteem and locus of control should have a meaningful impact on a student's academic achievement. Socioeconomic status and ability may influence both self-esteem and academic achievement, with the observed relation between self-esteem and academic achievement simply the end result of this influence. Locus of control also has a meaningful impact on achievement, with internalizers achieving at a higher level even after background influences are controlled. Self-esteem does seem to have a meaningful impact on locus of control, with a higher self-esteem leading to a more internal locus of control. It appears that programs designed to produce a more internal locus of control, if successful, may also have a positive impact on academic achievement (Keith, 1985).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

This chapter presents an explanation of how participants were selected for participation in the NS-YOU group and control group. The three testing instruments are identified and explained in detail. Testing procedures are also described. The NS-YOU program (treatment the NS-YOU group received) is described in full detail. Finally, descriptions of the research design and statistical analysis are given.

Participant Selection

All participants in the study were in the eighth grade and enrolled in the public junior high schools in Assumption, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes. The participants were identified by their schools' counselors as potential dropouts using indicators such as low academic achievement, low self-esteem, external locus of control, grade repeater, and family financial problems. All participants were 14 or 15 years old and either repeating the eighth grade or entering the ninth grade in the Fall of 1989. Adolescents automatically eligible were those in families receiving one or more of the following: Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Social Security Insurance (SSI), and Food

Stamps. Also automatically eligible were those adolescents who were foster children or had a handicap as a barrier to employment.

Students, after being referred by school counselors, were given an application to be filled out by their parents which requested information about family size (total number of family members in the household by blood relation or marriage). This application also requested social security numbers, places of employment, monthly salaries, and copies of paycheck stubs for the last six months for each family member. When completed, these applications were processed and eligibility determined based on low-income guidelines set by J.T.P.A. and the Louisiana Department of Labor (LDOL). These guidelines are based on family size, rural or non-rural living environment, and annual family income. For example, the annualized income for a family of 4 cannot exceed $11,780 if they live in a rural area or $12,560 if they live in a non-rural area. A more detailed chart of these guidelines is provided in Appendix A along with a list of items that are considered excludable or includable income. Any student who fell within these guidelines became part of the sample population from the tri-parish consortium.

The eligible students were assigned either to the NS-YOU program or an alternate list control group using stratified random selection. The total population of all available students was divided into four groups: black males, white males, black females, and white females. The students in each of the four groups were assigned numbers from 01 through 20. Due to the large number of qualifying black students in this tri-parish area, the NS-YOU Program selected eight black males and eight black females to participate as opposed to seven white males and seven white females. The students who participated in the NS-YOU 1989 Summer Program were chosen using a table of random numbers. A control group made up of an equal number of students with the same distribution by race and gender was chosen in the same manner as the participants from the alternate list of remaining students.

Instrumentation

The three instruments used were the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1981a), the Self-Esteem Inventories (SEI) (Coopersmith, 1981b), and the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale) (Rotter, 1966).

The CTBS (see Appendix B) is an achievement test that may be used to assess the basic skills attained by students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The subject areas covered by the tests are reading, spelling, language, mathematics, reference skills, science, and social studies; but the NS-YOU program used only two of these tests, reading and mathematics. For each grade level the test contains two forms, Forms U and V. Level H is recommended for grade levels 6.6 through 8.9 (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1981a).

Each test for both Forms U and V specifies four process objectives that are tested in each of the content areas at each level of testing:

1. recall of previously learned information,
2. understanding of explicitly stated information,
3. using inferential reasoning, and
4. evaluating. (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1983a, p. 10)

The content areas to which these process objectives are applied were obtained through an "analysis of state and district curriculum guides, currently used textbooks, instructional programs, and other achievement tests" (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1983a, p. 10). Items were also checked for vocabulary level, reading level, and bias.

The examiner's manual is quite complete and gives clear instructions for preparing the students for testing and administering the test. Separate instructions and time limits are provided for each test. The tests themselves are clearly printed in easily handled test booklets (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1981b). Answer sheets are used for Level F through K. Students are instructed to mark their answers in pencil and to erase their answers if they wish to change an answer. Hand-scorable answer sheets are used and scored with an acetate stencil. The hand-scoring procedure for converting scores is rather tedious. But once the raw scores have been converted to a scale score, the scale score provides easy access to all other conversion scores, i.e., stanines, percentile ranks, and grade equivalents (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1983b).

The CTBS was designed to provide information on the particular skills mastered by a student. This mastery information is particularly useful for classroom teachers in identifying the areas of weakness and strength in a class and in planning the focus of instruction. For each Form (U and V) and Level (A through K) both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced interpretations of the scores are provided. Provided in

these interpretations are norm-referenced interpretations, percentile ranks, grade-equivalent scores, stanines, and standard scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 21.06. This standard deviation was determined so that the normal curve equivalent scores of 1, 50, and 99 would correspond to percentile scores of 1, 50, and 99 respectively (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1982, 1984).

Sampling procedures for the CTBS, Forms U and V, were designed to provide fall and spring norms based on a sample of the entire United States population including the District of Columbia. The combined fall and spring norming sample contained approximately 250,000 students in Grades K through 12 from public, Catholic, and other private schools. School districts, type of school (public, Catholic, or private), and student grade levels to be tested from each school were randomly selected from the entire United States population. The fall testing took place during the week of October 6 through 10, 1980 and included a total sampling population of 103,884 students tested in 413 schools using the CTBS Form U. This test was administered jointly with the Test of Cognitive Skills (TCS). One-third of the students tested in the fall

were administered Form V test books to serve the purpose of tryout and calibration with Form U. The spring testing was conducted during the week of April 27 through May 1, 1981 and included a total sampling population of 153,446 students from 445 schools (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1983a).

In selecting students for inclusion in the norming sample, testing coordinators were asked to exclude special education students not included in any of the school district's group-testing programs. After testing, each school was asked to provide detailed information on the categories of its special education students and report the number of such students tested (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1983b).

According to Gellman (1985), the reliability coefficients reported are the Kuder-Richardson 20 coefficients for the number-correct scoring. The coefficients for the individual tests range from a low of .65 on the Level A Vocabulary Test to a high of .95 on the Level G Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension Tests at the sixth grade level. Most of the coefficients are .90 and above, with all coefficients for combined tests above .90 or tests at Level C and above (Gellman, 1985). Split-half test coefficients for

Form U, Level H ranged from .89 to .98. The coefficients for the reading and mathematics subtests are .97 and .96 respectively (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1984).

Gellman (1985) stated that there is some "evidence regarding concurrent validity of Forms U and V of the CTBS provided in the form of correlations between Form U and Form S and between Form U and the Test of Cognitive Skills" (p. 194). The correlations between the total battery scores on Form U and Form S ranged from .87 to .92 (Gellman, 1985). For Form U, Level H, the correlations for the reading and mathematics subtests are .87 and .85 respectively (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1984). The correlations of the total scale score on the CTBS with the total scale score on the Test of Cognitive Skills ranged from a low of .60 to a high of .82 (Gellman, 1985). For Form U, Level H, the correlation coefficients ranged from a low of .77 for the total battery to a high of .95 for total reading (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1984).

Correlations of cross-validation were obtained by having part of the national sample administer CTB/McGraw-Hill's PRI Reading System and Diagnostic Mathematics Inventory with the CTBS (Gellman, 1985). The scores on these additional instruments were used to

develop regression formulae for predicting scores for part of the sample on Form U. Correlations ranged from .62 to .89 for the total reading scores and from .76 to .82 for the total mathematics scores. The tests appear to be "well-constructed, normed, easily administered, and provide a wealth of useful information regarding student performance" (Gellman, 1985, p. 196).

The SEI (see Appendix C) is designed to measure evaluative attitudes toward the self in social, academic, family, and personal areas of experience. There is also a Lie Scale that indicates extremely socialized response sets. The School Form used by the NS-YOU program was designed for use with group populations aged nine through adult. This form is used with students aged 8 through 15 and consists of 58 items: 50 self-esteem items and 8 items that constitute the Lie Scale, which measures a student's defensiveness or test wiseness.

Administration is simple and the test does not exceed 15 minutes. During administration, introductory or explanatory remarks are kept to a minimum. The words "self-esteem," "self-concept," and "self-evaluation" are not used. The directions are read aloud and the students are asked to follow along in their inventory

booklets. Questions are discouraged once the students have begun working.

The SEI can be scored in a few minutes using the scoring keys for the form that has been administered. The self-esteem items yield a total score and, if desired, separate scores for four subscales: General Self, Social Self-Peers, Home-Parents, and School-Academic. The subscales allow for variances in perceptions of self-esteem in different areas of experience. The School Form includes eight items (26, 32, 36, 41, 45, 50, 53, and 58) that constitute the Lie Scale. To score the Lie Scale, award one point for each Lie Scale item answered "like-me." A high score on the Lie Scale may indicate that the examinee responded defensively or thought he or she understood the "intention" of the inventory and was attempting to respond positively to all items. In such instances, the inventory may be invalid especially if supplemental observations indicate low or medium self-esteem.

Spatz and Johnston (1973) administered the SEI to over 600 students. All socioeconomic ranges and many ethnic and cultural groups were represented. One hundred inventories were selected for the ninth grade and Kuder-Richardson reliability estimates (KR20s) were

calculated; the obtained coefficient was .86. This coefficient indicates adequate internal consistency for students in this age group. Spatz and Johnston (1973), in another study of reliability, reported testing 100 students from each of 3 grade levels which were 5th, 9th, and 12th graders. KR20s were computed and reliability coefficients of .81, .86, and .80 were reported for each grade level respectively.

Adair (1985), in a study of public elementary school children, reported reliability data of internal consistency computed by KR20s as ranging from .85 to .94 for grades 4 to 8 on the SEI. In other studies, "Fullerton (1972) reported a split-half reliability coefficient of .87 for 104 students and Taylor and Reitz (1968) reported a coefficient of .90" (Coopersmith, 1981b). Spatz and Johnston (1973) reported the "test-retest reliability after a 5-week interval with a sample of 30 fifth grade children as .88, and the reliability after a 3-year interval with a different sample of 56 children as .70" (p. 875).

Sewell (1985) stated that the "validity data for the SEI is drawn from a number of independent studies" and "is quite impressive" (p. 397). Internal

consistency data reported in the form of KR20s ranged from .87 to .92 for sixth through eighth graders.

Kokenes (1978) investigated construct validity using over 7600 public school students in grades fourth through eighth. This study confirmed the construct validity of the subscales proposed by Coopersmith as measuring sources of self-esteem designed to observe the comparative importance of the home, peers, and school to the global self-esteem of adolescents. Donaldson (1974) estimated predictive validity by correlating subscales scores of the SEI through regression analysis.

Adair (1985) stated that the "School Form of the SEI may be used by counselors, researchers, or teachers to provide an initial baseline measure of self-esteem" (p. 228) prior to implementing a program designed to enhance the self-esteem of adolescents. Furthermore, high self-esteem as indicated by "high scores on the SEI have been positively correlated with creativity, academic achievement, resistance to group pressure, willingness to express unpopular opinions, and effective communication between parents and youth" (Adair, 1985, p. 228).

The I-E Scale (see Appendix D) is a 29-item, forced-choice test including 6 filler items intended to

make the purpose of the test somewhat ambiguous. The higher the score the more external the individual. In reading the test items, it is clear that the items deal exclusively with the adolescents' belief about the "nature of the world" (Rotter, 1966, p. 188). The items are concerned with determining the subjects' perception about how reinforcement is controlled. "Consequently, the test is considered to be a measure of generalized expectancy" (Rotter, 1966, p. 188). D. G. Coleman (1988) states that such a generalized expectancy may be found to correlate with the value the subject places on internal control, but none of the items directly address the preference for internal or external control.

Administration of the I-E Scale is straightforward. Students are instructed that the I-E Scale is a questionnaire used to "find out the way in which certain important events in our society affect different people" (Rotter, 1966, p. 210). Each item consists of a pair of alternatives lettered "a" or "b." Students are asked to select the one statement from each pair (and only one) that best describes what they more strongly believe. They are also instructed to be sure to select the item that they actually believe and not the one they would like to be true. In instances where they may discover

that they believe both statements or neither one, they are asked to select the one that they more strongly believe. Finally, they are told that the questionnaire is a measure of personal belief: "obviously there are no right or wrong answers" (Rotter, 1966, p. 210).

Lefcourt (1982) studied the test-retest reliability for a 1-month period and found it to be quite consistent while using two very different samples. The correlations were .60 for group 1, all males, .83 for group 2, all females, and .72 for the combined groups. In a 2-month period, he found the reliabilities to be somewhat lower. These correlations were .49 for group 1, .61 for group 2, and .55 for the combined groups. He further reported that the test-retest reliability score typically dropped about 1 point in the direction of less externality when students were retested (Lefcourt, 1982).

Lefcourt (1981) reported test-retest reliabilities for a 1-week period were in the .60-.79 range and comparable correlations of a 7-week test-retest interval as .66, .62, and .73. Lefcourt (1984) cited a study done by Valecha and Ostrom (1974) which reported "a correlation of .69 between the original and a modified Rotter Scale" (p. 9).

Hersch and Scheibe (1967) reported the test-retest reliability of the I-E Scale as "consistent and acceptable" (p. 609), ranging between .49 and .83 for varying samples in 1-month interval groups. For the 2-month interval groups the test-retest reliability coefficients ranged from .43 to .84 (Hersch & Scheibe, 1967).

DuCette and Wolk (1972), in several studies of validity, correlated the I-E Scale with the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale using a number of college student samples and the correlations typically ranged between -.07 to -.35. DuCette and Wolk (1972) state that this high range is believed to be due to differences in testing conditions from college to college. A correlation of -.22 would better represent the median for the different samples of college students when male and female scores are combined (DuCette & Wolk, 1972).

Rotter (1982) stated that discriminant validity of the I-E Scale, in relationship to adjustment, clearly showed an "interaction between internality and experience of success" (p. 195). Furthermore, in groups of maladjusted adolescents there was more variability on I-E Scale scores and more frequently they had high

scores in the direction of externality. Rotter (1982) stated that the "relationship between a high external score on the I-E Scale and test variables such as adjustment, social desirability or need for approval, and intelligence were low" (p. 196) and is a "good indication of discriminant validity" (p. 197). Phares (1965) stated that internal students, those students that score low external scores on the I-E Scale, were significantly more successful socially and academically than their external counterparts.

The I-E Scale was correlated with the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, and the student samples ranged between -.35 and -.40. A correlation of "-.22 represents the median for the different samples of students where males and females were combined" (Rotter, 1966, p. 191). Rotter (1982) stated that these differences in means of selected populations are generally a weak criterion for validity. Nevertheless, Mirels (1970) stated differences obtained for different types of populations are generally consistent with expectancies.

Procedure

All participants and alternates were pretested at the beginning of the NS-YOU Summer Program and

posttested at the end of the NS-YOU Summer Program in a large auditorium group setting. For the purposes of the program, Level H, which is recommended for grade levels 6.6 through 8.9 (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 1981a), was administered to all participants. The pretest was Level H, Form U and the posttest was Level H, Form V. Directions for administering the tests came directly from the administration manuals. Everyone was given the same directions and no additional help during testing. The participants, alternates, and the testing conditions were monitored closely by room monitors, teachers, and program supervisors. Everyone was given a short break between the reading and mathematics tests. The tests were administered both in pretesting and posttesting in the following order:

1. Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)
2. Self-Esteem Inventories (SEI)
3. Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale)

All participants and alternates will be tested 6 months after the posttesting date. The follow-up testing will take place under all of the same conditions as with both the pretest and posttest. Participants and alternates will be given the same

directions and monitoring. The tests will be administered in the same order: 1. CTBS, 2. SEI, and 3. I-E Scale. The follow-up test to be used will be the CTBS, Level H, Form U.

Treatment/The NS-YOU Program

The NS-YOU Program that the NS-YOU (treatment) group has received is a program designed by Nicholls State University staff. It provided dropout intervention/prevention to low-income disadvantaged youth in order to retain them in school with the final goal of their receiving a high school diploma.

The program revolved around three major components each day. These components were basic education, on-the-job work training, and extracurricular activities/dormitory life. In basic education the participants were placed into one of the three classes offered which were low reading/mathematics, low reading, or high reading, according to their CTBS test scores. In the work training component participants were placed at a worksite based on their ranking of choices and the availability of their preferred choices. Extracurricular activities/dorm life included an entire collage of activities ranging from study hall and guest speakers to recreation and swimming.

The staff for the NS-YOU Program was selected by the Program Supervisor and Assistant Program Supervisor. Applications were made available to all interested Nicholls students, staff, and faculty. All applicants were initially screened when they picked up their application. They were then interviewed as soon as their application process had been completed. After all interviews were completed, those with the highest qualifications were called in for a second interview before the final selections were made. All applicants were notified by letter as to whether they had been accepted or not. All staff were hired one month before the program began and a list of alternates was compiled.

Training of all staff took place at Nicholls State University. Classroom teachers were given a list of their participants and test scores so that they could begin to develop lesson plans, activities, worksheets and tests based on the individual needs of each of their participants. Worksite staff members were briefed on the work laws involving minors including the types of machinery the participants were and were not allowed to operate, handle, or be near during operation. They were given a list of tasks which all participants should learn at some point during their employment to include

typing, filing, and proper telephone usage if they were placed in a job in an office setting.

The most extensive training that took place was with the residence hall staff which included the professional counselor. These staff members were in constant, immediate contact with all the participants during the remaining 16 hours each day when the participants were not in class or at work. Their staff training took place for 5 full days prior to the arrival of the participants. They were trained in residence hall emergency procedures, participant rules and regulations, community building, small group activities, steps involved in handling discipline situations, crisis intervention, crisis management, basic counseling skills, time management, tutoring skills, and the basic rules of all indoor and outdoor recreational games available.

Participants were placed into their academic classes based on the scores on their CTBS pretest. They were placed in either reading/mathematics or reading depending on the score that was lowest. When these two scores were the same, they were automatically placed in reading unless they had failed math in their past school year. Participants who scored at or above 7.9 on both

reading and mathematics were placed in the high reading class.

The academic curriculum was based on the individual needs of each participant in the NS-YOU Program as indicated by their scores on the CTBS. Each teacher designed her/his own class curriculum and presented a copy of lesson plans to the Program Supervisor for approval prior to the arrival of the participants.

Participants were placed on worksites based on their ranking of worksite choices available. Where possible participants were placed in their first choice job. If this was not possible, they were definitely placed in their second or third place choices. All participants took part in videotaped interviews prior to job selection to be sure that they were being honest about their job preferences and that they fully understood the responsibilities involved in each of those choices. The worksite supervisor, after all interviews were completed, assigned all the participants to a worksite on the Nicholls campus. All participants worked a maximum of 20 hours each week for a 6-week period each afternoon earning minimum wage.

Extracurricular activities were part of the residence hall component of the program. The

participants spent the remainder of their time when not in class or at work in the residence hall under the immediate supervision of the residence hall staff. Their activities included:

1. One hour of mandatory study hall each night;
2. One hour of small group sessions each night to work on social skills;
3. One hour of indoor recreation each night which included table billiards, ping pong, UNO, Pictionary and various board games;
4. One hour of outdoor recreation each Monday and Wednesday night which included volleyball, softball, basketball, horseshoes, tennis, croquet, kickball, paddleball and badminton;
5. One hour of swimming lessons or free swimming each Tuesday and Thursday night;
6. One hour of group meetings with guest speakers on various topics which included banking, personal grooming, self-esteem building, drug and alcohol use/abuse, goal setting, and physical health topics each Monday and Wednesday night; and
7. One hour of group meetings each Monday night presented by the vocational supervisor on the

"World of Work," "Jobs of the 1990s," and "Non-Traditional Careers."

Participants who broke rules and regulations with behaviors such as fighting, classroom disruption, or insubordination were immediately reprimanded. First-time offenders were not allowed to go to work for 2 hours on the afternoon following the offense. Second-time offenders were not allowed to go to work for 4 hours. Third-time offenders were suspended from the program for 3 days beginning on the day of the offense. Fourth-time offenders were expelled from the program.

Research Design

The method of research proposed for this study is that of a Field Experimental research design, using an experimental-control group pretest-posttest design.

Statistical Analysis

All hypotheses will be tested at the .05 level of significance using a two-way ANOVA. In addition to these analyses, means and standard deviations for the various tests will be reported.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the data analyses conducted to test the hypotheses stated in Chapter 1. The hypotheses are restated as follows:

With regard to scores obtained for each dependent variable (reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control) on a posttest and 6-month follow-up test:

1. There will be no significant main effect of Groups (NS-YOU vs. control).
2. There will be no significant main effect of Time (posttest vs. 6-month follow-up test).
3. There will be no significant interaction effects between Groups and Time.

The hypotheses were tested using a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of Groups (NS-YOU vs. control) X Time (posttest vs. 6-month follow-up test). Each hypothesis was tested using a separate ANOVA for each dependent variable. Results of each ANOVA will be presented separately. The critical F ratio for these ANOVAs is $F(1,58)=4.00$, $p<.05$. Means and standard deviations are reported in Table 2.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Posttest and Follow-up Test Scores of the NS-YOU and Control Groups

	NS-YOU				Control			
	Posttest		Follow-up		Posttest		Follow-up	
Test	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
CTBS Reading Subtest	7.39	1.48	7.80	2.05	6.56	1.52	6.73	1.23
CTBS Math Subtest	8.37	1.76	8.88	1.89	7.02	1.54	7.29	1.62
Self-Esteem Inventory	65.40	13.86	71.00	12.90	54.57	11.59	63.00	11.81
Rotter's I-E Scale	10.47	3.14	9.73	2.48	13.63	2.33	11.47	2.86

Note: NS-YOU Group (N=30); Control Group (N=30).

Reading Scores

The results of the ANOVA with regard to reading test scores are presented in Table 3. The main effect of Groups was significant (F=6.37, df=1, $p<.05$) with the NS-YOU group scoring higher (M=7.60) than the control group (M=6.65). The main effect of Time was not significant. Interaction effects between Groups and Time were not significant. Results indicated that the NS-YOU group improved by 4 months in reading during the 6-month period, whereas the control group improved 1 month. The test scores did not decrease for either group over the 6-month period indicating that posttest gains were comparable for both groups and maintained to the follow-up test. Overall, the NS-YOU group, at the time of the 6-month follow-up test, was functioning 1 year and 1 month (M=7.80) higher in reading than the control group (M=6.73) (see Figure 1).

With regard to reading test scores, the null hypothesis for the main effect of Groups can be rejected. Results did not show a significant difference as a function of the main effect of Time nor an interaction effect between Groups and Time; therefore, the other 2 null hypotheses must be retained.

Table 3

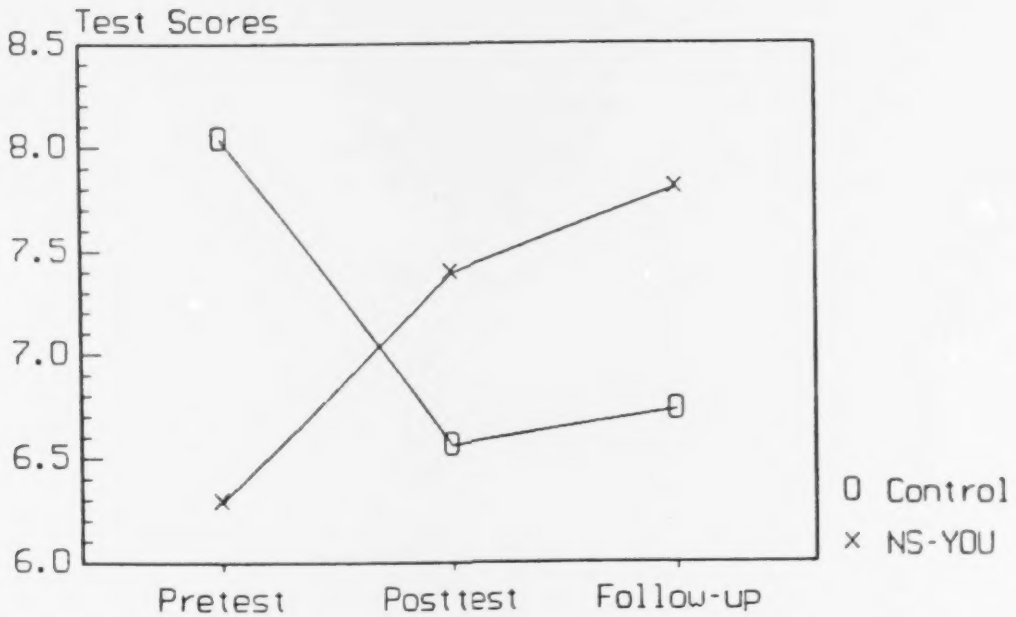
ANOVA for Reading Test Scores

Scores of variation	SS	df	MS	F
Between Groups (NS-YOU vs. control)	27.17	1	27.17	6.37
Within Groups (Posttest vs. follow-up test)	2.49	1	2.49	2.44
Interaction (Groups X Time)	.45	1	.45	.44

Note: NS-YOU Group (N=30); Control Group (N=30).

Figure 1

Reading Scores



NS-YOU Group and Control Group (N=30)

Mathematics Scores

The results of the ANOVA with regard to mathematics test scores are presented in Table 4. The main effect of Groups was significant (F=11.92, df=1, $p<.05$) with the NS-YOU group scoring higher (M=8.63) than the control group (M=7.16). The main effect of Time was significant (F=7.83, df=1, $p<.05$) with the follow-up test scores being higher (M=8.08) than the posttest scores (M=7.70). Interaction effects between Groups and Time were not significant. Results indicated that the NS-YOU group improved by 5 months in mathematics during the 6-month period, whereas the control group improved 2 months. The test scores did not decrease for either group over the 6-month period indicating that posttest gains were comparable for both groups and maintained to the follow-up test. Overall, the NS-YOU group, at the time of the 6-month follow-up test, was functioning 1 year and 6 months (M=8.88) higher in mathematics than the control group (M=7.29) (see Figure 2).

With regard to mathematics test scores, the null hypotheses for the main effect of Groups and the main effect of Time can both be rejected. Results did not show an interaction effect between Groups and Time; therefore, the third null hypothesis must be retained.

Table 4

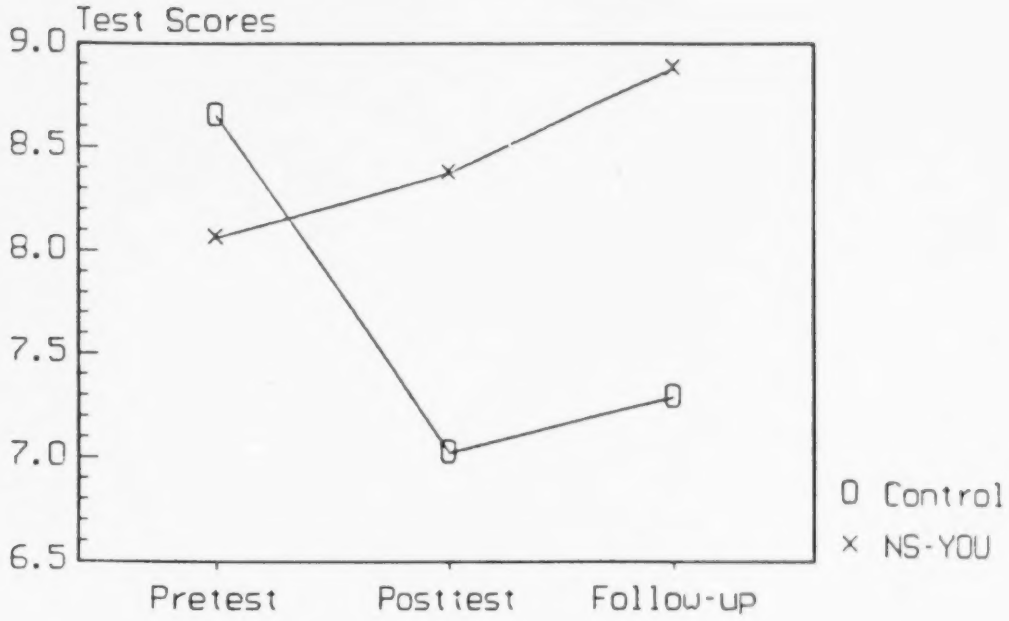
ANOVA for Mathematics Test Scores

Scores of variation	SS	df	MS	F
Between Groups (NS-YOU vs. control)	64.83	1	64.83	11.92
Within Groups (Posttest vs. follow-up test)	4.64	1	4.64	7.83
Interaction (Groups X Time)	.43	1	.43	.73

Note: NS-YOU Group (N=30); Control Group (N=30).

Figure 2

Mathematics Scores



NS-YOU Group and Control Group (N=30)

Self-Esteem Scores

The results of the ANOVA with regard to self-esteem test scores are presented in Table 5. The main effect of Groups was significant (F=9.85, df=1, p<.05) with the NS-YOU group scoring higher (M=68.20) than the control group (M=58.78). The main effect of Time was significant (F=25.95, df=1, p<.05) with the follow-up test scores being higher (M=67.00) than the posttest scores (M=59.98). Interaction effects between Groups and Time were not significant. Results indicated that the control group improved 8.43 points on the self-esteem test during the 6-month period, whereas the NS-YOU group improved 5.60 points. The test scores did not decrease for either group over the 6-month period indicating that posttest gains were comparable for both groups and maintained to the follow-up test. Even though there were larger improvements on self-esteem scores for the control group, at the time of the 6-month follow-up test, the NS-YOU group still scored 8.00 points higher (M=71.00) on the self-esteem test than the control group (M=63.00) (see Figure 3).

With regard to self-esteem test scores, the null hypotheses for the main effect of Groups and the main

Table 5

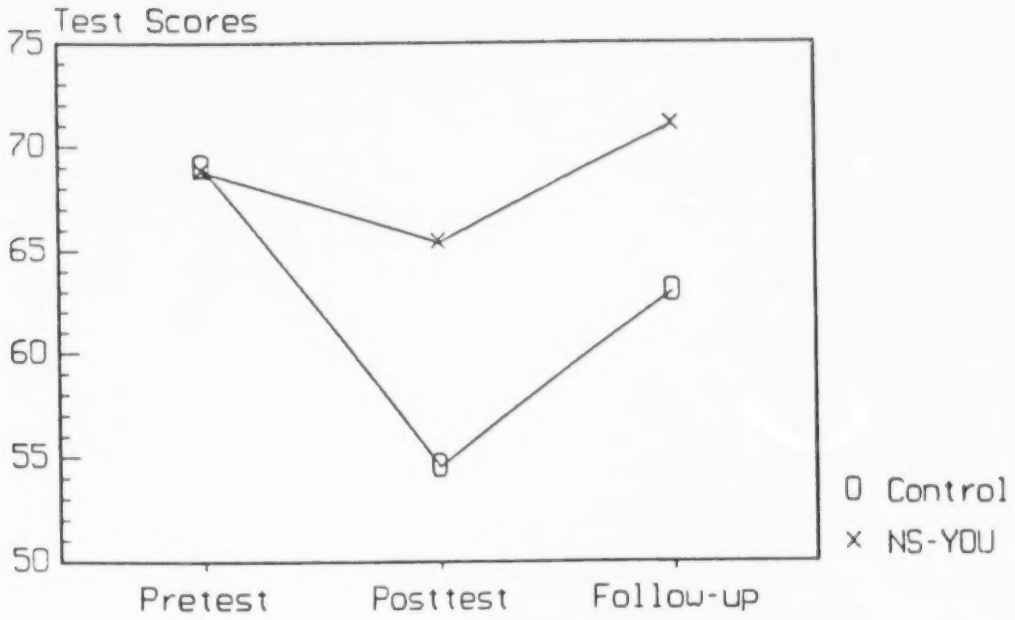
ANOVA for Self-Esteem Test Scores

Scores of variation	SS	df	MS	F
Between Groups (NS-YOU vs. control)	2660.22	1	2660.22	9.85
Within Groups (Posttest vs. follow-up test)	1477.03	1	1477.03	25.95
Interaction (Groups X Time)	60.23	1	60.23	1.06

Note: NS-YOU Group (N=30); Control Group (N=30).

Figure 3

Self-Esteem Scores



NS-YOU Group and Control Group (N=30)

effect of Time can both be rejected. Results did not show an interaction effect between Groups and Time; therefore, the third null hypothesis must be retained.

Locus of Control Scores

The results of the ANOVA with regard to locus of control test scores are presented in Table 6. The main effect of Groups was significant (F=18.30, df=1, p<.05) with the NS-YOU group scoring lower (M=10.10, less external) than the control group (M=12.55, more external). The main effect of Time was significant (F=11.54, df=1, p<.05) with the follow-up test scores being lower (M=10.60, less external) than the posttest scores (M=12.05, more external). Interaction effects between Groups and Time were not significant. Results indicated that the NS-YOU group scores decreased (became less external) by .74 points on the locus of control test during the 6-month period, whereas the control group scores decreased by 2.16 points. The test scores did not increase for either group over the 6-month period indicating that posttest gains were comparable for both groups and maintained to the follow-up test. Even though the decrease in scores was much greater for the control group, at the time of the 6-month follow-up test, the NS-YOU group still scored 1.74 points lower

Table 6

ANOVA for Locus of Control Test Scores

Scores of variation	SS	df	MS	F
Between Groups (NS-YOU vs. control)	180.07	1	180.07	18.30
Within Groups (Posttest vs. follow-up test)	63.07	1	63.07	11.54
Interaction (Groups X Time)	15.41	1	15.41	2.82

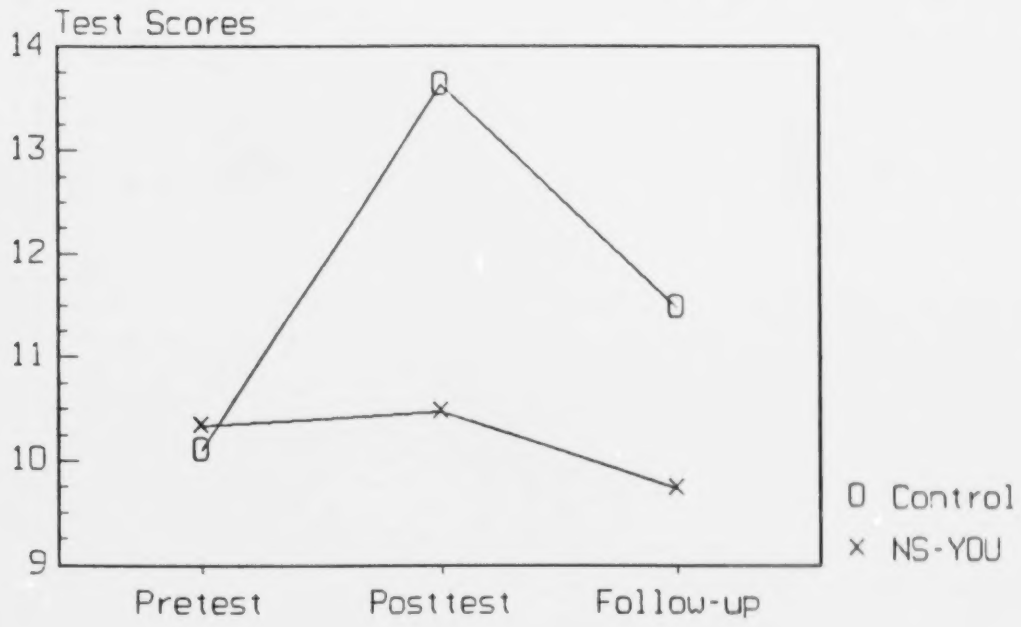
Note: NS-YOU Group (N=30); Control Group (N=30).

(M=9.73, less external) on the locus of control test than the control group (M=11.47, more external) (see Figure 4).

With regard to locus of control test scores, the null hypotheses for the main effect of Groups and the main effect of Time can both be rejected. The results did not show an interaction effect between Groups and Time; therefore, the third null hypothesis must be retained.

Figure 4

Locus of Control Scores



NS-YOU Group and Control Group (N=30)

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present research was designed to determine whether over a 6-month period of time the NS-YOU participants maintained gains made during the 7-week summer program and how they compared to a control group in the areas of academic achievement (reading and mathematics), self-esteem, and locus of control.

Discussion

Academic achievement, as defined by this study, refers to school grades in the areas of reading and mathematics. In reference to academic achievement, between-group differences revealed that the NS-YOU group scored higher than the control group in the areas of reading and mathematics. Looking at within-group differences, the NS-YOU group scored higher than the control group on both the posttest and the 6-month follow-up test, with the 6-month follow-up scores being higher than the posttest scores. The NS-YOU group was functioning approximately one and one half years higher than the control group in both reading and mathematics at the time of the 6-month follow-up test.

These results are consistent with the findings of Alexander et al. (1985) who found that without formal

classroom training during the summer months, low-income youths usually decline during this time period and have difficulty regaining these losses. In the study of Bartel (1971), it was found that low-income youths performed more poorly as they progressed through school each year. In the present study, this held to be true for the control group which is functioning farther below grade level than the NS-YOU group.

Self-esteem, as defined by this study, refers to the evaluation that individuals make of their own personal worthiness. In reference to self-esteem, between-group differences revealed that the NS-YOU group scored higher than the control group. Looking at within-group differences, the NS-YOU group scored higher than the control group on both the posttest and the 6-month follow-up test, with the 6-month follow-up scores being higher than the posttest scores.

These results are consistent with the findings of Covington and Beery (1976) who found that adolescents quickly learn to assume that their worth as human beings depends heavily on their ability to learn. Therefore, as their academic achievements improve, so will their feelings of self-worth. Studies done by Alawiye and Alawiye (1984) and Gurney (1987) both indicate that

there is a relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement. Both studies indicated improvement in academic achievement and self-esteem enhancement. In the present study, this relationship held; the higher the NS-YOU group scored in areas of academic achievement, the higher their scores were in self-esteem.

Locus of control, as defined by this study, refers to the extent to which individuals believe that their own behavior determines the outcome of their lives. In reference to locus of control, between-group differences revealed that the NS-YOU group rated themselves more internal than the control group. Looking at within-group differences, the NS-YOU group rated themselves more internal than the control group on both the posttest and the 6-month follow-up test, with ratings for the 6-month follow-up test being more internal than those for the posttest.

These results are consistent with the findings of Bailey (1987) and Madonna (1987) who both found that as self-esteem improved, adolescents became more internal in their locus of control with the internalizers consistently outperforming the externalizers in academic achievement. Furthermore, Holly (1987) found that as

externalizers developed more self-confidence and felt a sense of control over their own lives through opportunities for academic success, they became more internalized. In the present study, this relationship held; the NS-YOU group showed improvement in areas of academic achievement, self-esteem, and locus of control (they became more internalized) on the 6-month follow-up test scores.

The results of the present study provide evidence that the NS-YOU participants maintained the gains made on the posttest and surpassed their control group counterparts based on their follow-up test scores in the areas of reading, mathematics, self-esteem, and locus of control. Therefore, these adolescents have a better chance of remaining in school. This statement is further supported by Purkey (1970), who found that low-income adolescents who experienced repeated successes in academic achievement are more likely to develop a more positive feeling about themselves and their school environment and thus remain in school longer than their counterparts who continue to encounter failure.

Furthermore, in a study by Liebert et al. (1986), it was found that adolescents who score higher on

achievement tests tend to become more internalized. This is in agreement with other studies that have found that both self-esteem and locus of control have a meaningful impact on an adolescent's academic achievement (Bailey, 1987; Dixon, 1986; Keith, 1985; Padwal, 1984). Finally, programs designed to produce a more internalized locus of control, if successful, may also have a positive impact on academic achievement (Keith, 1985).

Recommendations

This research suggests several other avenues for further investigation:

1. The most obvious research would be to obtain longitudinal data on the NS-YOU participants as well as the control group. This would help to provide evidence that the NS-YOU program and programs like it help low-income students remain in school until graduation.
2. This study has determined that the NS-YOU participants have maintained program gains for at least 6 months. However, no inferences have been made about what might have caused these gains. Therefore, several areas of the NS-YOU program should be investigated in order to

to the students' academic success. Suggested areas for this additional research might include: student learning styles, teaching styles, impact of work experience on learning, student/teacher personality types, counseling programs, study skills, and social skills learning.

3. A detailed description should be done on the in-depth training program used by NS-YOU to train the faculty and staff in working with potential dropouts and determine if this extensive training has any impact on the program's successful results. This information would be very useful for use in other dropout intervention/prevention type programs already in existence, or it could be used as a model for future programs of this kind.

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APPENDIX A

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

Eligibility Chart

Revised and Effective 4/20/89

FAMILY SIZE	POVERTY	METROPOLITAN	NON-METROPOLITAN
1	5,980	4,520	4,240
2	8,020	7,410	6,950
3	10,060	10,170	9,540
4	12,100	12,560	11,780
5	14,140	14,820	13,900
6	16,180	17,330	16,260
7	18,220	19,840	18,620
8	20,260	22,350	20,980
9	22,300	24,860	23,340
10	24,340	27,370	25,700
11	26,380	29,880	28,060
12	28,420	32,390	30,420
13	30,460	34,900	32,780
14	32,500	37,410	35,140
15	34,540	39,920	37,500

EXCLUDABLE INCOME

1. Food Stamps
2. Rental value of owner-occupied property
3. Welfare payment (AFDC)
4. Social Security Payments
5. Unemployment benefits (Federal, State, or Local)
6. Payment made in employment/training programs
7. Scholarship and Fellowship grants
8. Capital gains and losses
9. Payments received under income maintenance programs and private unemployment plans. Accident, health and casualty insurance proceeds.
10. One time awards and gifts
11. Inheritance
12. Fixed-term workers' compensation awards
13. Terminal leave pay
14. Soil bank payments
15. Agriculture crop stabilization payments
16. Pay or allowances received by any veteran while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces.
17. Educational assistance and compensation payments to veterans and other eligible persons.
18. Payments received under Trade Act of 1974
19. Black Lung payments
20. Child Support payments
21. Income tax refunds
22. Foster care payments
23. Disaster assistance
24. Severance pay
25. Profit sharing (lump sum one time payments)

INCLUDABLE INCOME

1. Gross wages and salaries (before any deductions)
2. Net self-employment income (gross receipts minus operating expenses)
3. Net rents
4. Royalties
5. Pensions
6. Medical retirements
7. Alimony
8. Periodic income from insurance policy annuities
9. Interest from CD's

NOTE: Those adolescents that are foster children or have a handicap as a barrier to employment are considered to meet the income of a family of one.

APPENDIX B

COMPREHENSIVE TEST OF BASIC SKILLS

The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
is available from:

CTB/McGraw-Hill
Del Monte Research Park
Monterey, CA 93940

APPENDIX C

SELF-ESTEEM INVENTORY

The Self-Esteem Inventory

is available from:

Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

577 College Avenue

Palo Alto, CA 94360

APPENDIX D

ROTTER'S INTERNAL-EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL SCALE

ROTTER (1966)

The Rotter Internal-External
Locus of Control Scale
is available from:

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers
555 Academic Court
San Antonio, TX 78204

APPENDIX E

CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

I, _____ give my consent for
(Name of legal parent or guardian)

_____ to participate in the
(Name of participant)
graduate thesis research project being conducted by Beth Curry. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time and have the results of the participation returned to me, removed from the experimental records, or destroyed.

The following information has been made available to me in connection with participation in this research:

1. The reason for this research is to investigate test results obtained in the NS-YOU program and to compare them with results of tests obtained six months later.
2. The procedures to be followed during participation are as follows: NS-YOU participants and alternates will return to Nicholls for testing on February 17, 1990.
3. No discomforts will be faced during the testing.
4. The testing does not involve any risk to the participant.
5. The results of this participation are confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without my prior consent unless required by law. No identifying information will be reported in the researcher's thesis. After the results are analyzed, the test materials will become the property of the NS-YOU program.

The nature and purpose of this project have been satisfactorily explained to me.

_____	_____
Signature of Investigator	Parent or Legal Guardian
_____	_____
Date	Signature of Participant

PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES. KEEP ONE AND RETURN THE OTHER ONE TO THE INVESTIGATOR.

RESEARCH AND EXAMINATION REPORT

Candidate: Beth Ann Curry

Title: The Impact of the Nicholls State - Youth Opportunities Unlimited Program as Related to Academic Achievement, Self-Esteem, and Locus of Control

Date of Examination:

April 24, 1990

Approved:

James B Pierson
Chairperson

Earl John

Jane Ross-Reynolds

T W Caffarella
Coordinator of Graduate Studies

P C Burgess
Dean of the College of Education

Graduate Studies Form B
Revised March 1988